

Mayor David N. Cicilline's  
Poverty, Work and Opportunity Task Force

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Task Force Meeting  
April 4, 2007

# Taskforce Goals

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Develop and define an agenda to...

- Increase the ability of low-income families to improve their economic status.
- Decrease barriers to economic advancement facing families living in poverty in the city.
- Grow, retain and reclaim the middle class in Providence.

# Taskforce Product

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A final report will be issued in the early fall with findings and recommendations to the City of Providence, including:

- ❑ Clearly defined and feasible objectives.
- ❑ Strategies to achieve substantial and quantifiable outcomes.
- ❑ Specific municipal policy and programmatic recommendations.
- ❑ Specific state level policy and programmatic recommendations.
- ❑ Measurable benchmarks to evaluate effectiveness.

# Recommendations and strategies will...

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- ❑ Minimize duplication with other complementary municipal initiatives.
- ❑ Build upon existing efforts that align with Task Force goals.
- ❑ Draw upon best practices in other cities (e.g. high cost of being poor).
- ❑ Define initiatives and models tailored to the needs and strengths of Providence.
- ❑ Include roles for the city, the state, business, philanthropy, and community leaders.

# Task Force Timeline

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- Task Force meetings in March, April, May, June, September
- Business leaders meeting in late April
- Resident focus groups in May
- Draft of report in June – feedback on draft in July and August
- Review final report in September
- Release of final task force report in early October

# Overview of Poverty in Providence

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## Key Goals

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- Improve economic conditions of the working poor
- Address the high cost of being poor
- Prevent poverty in the next generation

# *Improve economic conditions of the working poor – possible strategies:*

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## Adult Education

- Adult education and ESL

## Youth Connections to Work (ages 15-24)

- Career exploration
- Internships
- High school graduation

## Workforce Development

- Career ladders
- Apprenticeships and credentialing
- Career pathways for entry-level employees through training
- Sector-focused career centers

# *Improve economic conditions of the working poor – possible strategies:*

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## Making Work Pay

- EITC
- Minimum wage, living wage
- Child care subsidies
- Health insurance
- Food Stamps
- Child support

# *Address the high cost of being poor – possible strategies:*

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## Access to Basic Financial Services

- Access to bank branches
- Check-cashing and short-term loans
- Minimize predatory lending (tax refund services, payday loans)

## Financial Literacy

- Asset-building and protection
- Financial education
- Access to small and micro-business lending

# *Address the high cost of being poor – possible strategies:*

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## Homes

- Home loans / home ownership
- House insurance
- Furniture, appliances (rent to own)

## Cars and Auto-related Necessities

- Car prices, car loans, car insurance, gas prices

## Other High-Cost Items

- Groceries
- Medical care (medical debt)

## *Prevent poverty in the next generation – possible strategies:*

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Two-generation strategies focused on parents and their children

- Career ladders for women with children (e.g. women enrolled in or transitioning from the Family Independence Program)
- Intensive support for teen parents and their children
- Universal access to pre-kindergarten for 3 and 4-year-olds
- Help for struggling readers in grades K-3

# Criteria for Objectives and Strategies

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➤ ***Meaningful***

Making a change in this will have a significant and positive impact on people in Providence and there are data showing need

➤ ***Measurable***

It is possible to make a measurable change within 3 years

➤ ***Effective***

There is a research-base showing effectiveness or promising models in other cities

➤ ***Feasible***

There is a realistic resource development strategy to accomplish this objective